



# Winter Weather Terminology



**OUTLOOK** - Hazardous Weather Outlooks are issued every day, and serve as a “heads-up” that a significant weather event may be possible in the next 2 to 7 days.

**ADVISORY** - An advisory is issued when winter weather events could cause a significant inconvenience, but could also lead to life threatening conditions if precautions are not taken.

**WATCH** - A watch is issued when a winter weather event has the potential to threaten life and property, but the exact timing and location of the storm is uncertain. Watches are normally issued between 12 to 48 hours in advance.

**WARNING** - A warning is issued when a winter weather event is occurring or is imminent, and poses a threat to life and property. Warnings are normally issued within 24 hours of the onset of an event.

## Winter Weather Product Criteria

### Advisory Products

**Freezing Rain** - Light accumulation of ice, generally less than 1/4 of an inch.

**Wind Chill** - Wind chill values of -20°F to -29°F

**Winter Weather** - Any single event or a combination of events from the list below where at least one meets advisory criteria.

- Snow accumulations of 3 to 5 inches in 12 hours
- Visibilities of 1/2 mile or less with snow and/or blowing snow, and wind speeds between 25 and 34 mph for at least 3 hours
- Sleet accumulation of less than 1/2 of an inch

## *Watch and Warning Products*

**Blizzard** - Snow and blowing snow with wind speeds of 35 mph or greater, and visibilities less than 1/4 of a mile for at least 3 hours.

**Ice Storm** - Widespread ice accumulation of 1/4 of an inch or more

**Wind Chill** - Wind chill values of -30°F or less

**Winter Storm** - Any single event or a combination of events from the list below where at least one meets warning criteria.

- Snow accumulations of 6 inches or more in 12 hours or 8 inches or more in 24 hours
- Sleet accumulation of 1/2 inch or more